‘Holding Hands’

A case study of China’s and the EU’s foreign aid to Zimbabwe.

Author: Charlotta Hallnäs
Supervisor: Hans Blomkvist
Abstract

During the 21st century China has emerged as an important donor of foreign aid to African countries, thereby offering an alternative to more well-established donors such as the EU. China is often claimed by scholars to embody the so called ‘Beijing Consensus’ while Western donors in comparison are rather believed to be upholders of the ‘Washington Consensus’. However, there is a lack of empirically based studies comparing these two actors, both in light of the two consensuses as well as with regard to their respective approaches within the foreign aid field.

Through a text analysis, of material regarding China and the EU’s aid activities in the case of Zimbabwe, this study took on a descriptive purpose and aimed at establishing whether these two actors truly diverge or whether they rather share certain similarities in regards to their foreign aid initiatives. Furthermore, the thesis also examined if the actions by either actor could be contained within, or if the actors could be categorised as belonging to, either the Beijing- or the Washington Consensus as defined by Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013). The results show that neither the Beijing- nor the Washington Consensus was adequate for addressing China and the EU in their roles as donors to Zimbabwe as neither actor exclusively encompasses either of the two consensuses. Moreover, through this study it became clear that the two actors shared many similarities with regards to choice of policy sectors, type of aid engagements and ways of implementation within Zimbabwe, while differences could rather be sensed in terms of underlying causes and driving motives for engaging in foreign aid activities.

Keywords: Foreign aid; Beijing Consensus; Washington Consensus; the EU; China; Zimbabwe.
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## Abbreviations

- ACP – Africa, Caribbean and Pacific
- DAC – Development Assistance Committee
- EDF – European Development Fund
- FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- GNU – Government of National Unity
- ICT – Information Communication Technology
- MDC-T – Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai
- MDC-M – Movement for Democratic Change-Mutambara
- NGO – Non Governmental Organizations
- NIP – National Indicative Programme
- ODA – Official Development Assistance
- OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- SIDA – Swedish International Development Assistance
- UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
- WHO – World Health Organisation
- WFP – World Food Programme
- ZANU-PF – Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Foreign Aid

Foreign aid to Africa is no new phenomenon and can be traced back to the colonization of the continent by many great European powers in the 20th century. For a long time Europe, later the EU, and other Western powers made up the main donors to Africa, but over the last couple of years the EU has lost significant political influence on the continent while many new actors have stepped in to take their place (Rylander, 2014). China is one such actor that is gaining influence on the continent as it is changing from being an aid recipient to an aid donor, however, the form in which China gives aid differs from traditional Western donors (McCormick, 2008). Some scholars go as far as to claim that the difference in aid approaches can be traced back to the foundation of the relationship between these different types of donors and their recipients in Africa. China-Africa relations are often marketed as being based on a sense of brotherhood, involving mutual respect and friendship while the relationship between Western and African countries is implicitly and explicitly underpinned by a sense of ‘masterhood’ by the former (Atuahene-Gima, 2008). It may be worth considering the fact that China itself is still a developing country in many aspects, with experience of being a recipient of foreign aid which might well influence its approach to other developing countries.

The existing body of literature on aid is huge with many opposite camps debating the pros and cons of foreign aid. There exists also a vast body of literature addressing what is referred to as the traditional approach to foreign aid, according to some, consistent with the principles of the ‘Washington Consensus’, while others discuss the presence of an alternative approach to aid, the so called ‘Beijing Consensus’. In this case China would classify as one such ‘new’ donor, embodying the Beijing Consensus, while the EU can be perceived as a traditional donor belonging to the Washington Consensus. Yet the question remains whether the difference between these two actors really is as apparent as some scholars claim, or if this classification into traditional and new approaches rather is a simplification of the complex structure of foreign aid? Can clear differences be distinguished or are there rather similarities between the strategies the two actors employ? These are important questions to ask and a comparison between the new and the more traditional donors is therefore valuable for assessing and establishing whether they differ from each other and, more importantly, in what way their approaches diverge.

1.2 Purpose and Research Question

With that in mind, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of research by empirically examining the differences between the EU and China when it comes to giving foreign aid and
assistance in Africa. For this purpose, Zimbabwe is used as the case under scrutiny as it has a longstanding relationship with both donors and has been under the influence of their aid for a considerable time. As foreign aid is such a powerful tool, both politically and economically, it is important to continue the debate concerning the complexities associated with it. Likewise, as China and the EU constitute some of the main donors to Zimbabwe it is important to gain a better insight into how these two donors approach foreign aid issues in the country. In addition such an empirical study will illuminate the debate concerning traditional versus new approaches of foreign aid, in accordance with the principles of the two consensuses already mentioned. The question to be answered in this thesis is therefore:

Does China’s form of foreign aid differ from that of the EU in the case of Zimbabwe, and can any adherence to the ‘Beijing-’ or ‘Washington Consensus’ be found?

To ease the process of exploring this subject the research question will be divided into four smaller and more detailed questions, which will also represent the analytical framework of this study. These questions will enable me to focus on the specific aid activities implemented by the EU and China in Zimbabwe. The analytical questions, which will be addressed more thoroughly later on in this paper, are as follows: What type of aid do donors provide and which policy sectors do they support? Do donors put any terms or conditions on their aid? Which are the main channels through which donors cooperate with the recipient country? And lastly, can any similarities to the principles of the Beijing- or Washington Consensus be found within the actors’ approach?

2. BACKGROUND
Zimbabwe was formerly known as Rhodesia, both during its time as a British colony and under the rule of Ian Smith and his discriminatory government. The country experienced a violent war of liberation lasting for over ten years, resulting in roughly 36,000 deaths (Högland - I, 2011). In 1980, the first free elections were held and established black majority rule under the leadership of Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF government. Now, 35 years later Mugabe still enjoys the Presidential title and his actions has garnered criticism over the years, both from within and outside of the country’s borders (Högland - II, 2011).

Zimbabwe and China’s friendship can be traced back to the time of the liberation struggle when the government of China stepped in and supported Mugabe and his freedom fighters. Since independence these bonds have been kept intact and strengthened through official state visits as well as passionate speeches commending one another and celebrating this friendship
Likewise, the relationship between the EU and Zimbabwe can also be traced back to 1980 when the EU started to provide development assistance to the newly independent country (European Commission, 2015).

The rule of Robert Mugabe has been tarnished over time due to the increased centralization of presidential power as well as events such as economic degradation, persecution of the opposition (Höglund – II, 2011) and violent land reforms in the early years of 2000 where white-owned farms were taken by force without any compensation, leading to the displacement of hundreds of farmworkers around the country (Rylander, 2016, forthcoming). These land reforms are crucial for understanding the present situation of Zimbabwe and the controversies surrounding this event resulted in the deterioration of the country’s relationship with the international community resulting in sanctions being imposed on the country by the EU among other Western actors. This in turn strengthened the relationship that Zimbabwe had with China as the latter stepped in to fill the void left by the isolation from the West (Chun, 2014).

Rich in terms of minerals as well as other natural resources the welfare of the country should be secured but so is not the case. Ordinary citizens still face hardship and the country remains dependent on foreign aid in a range of sectors (SIDA, 2014). According to John Robertson, Zimbabwe has become addicted to aid which is “leaving it increasingly debilitated, dependent and handicapped” (2003: 115). The sheer amount of aid flowing into the country over the years has harmed the government’s incentives toward maintaining and investing in a well-functioning private sector. It has furthermore given the government the “luxury of considering hopelessly inappropriate policies that they would not entertain for a moment if they had to bear the full consequences of their actions” (ibid: 115).

3. THEORY
3.1 Previous research

As already mentioned, the literature concerning foreign aid is vast with many diverging opinions among scholars. According to Todd Moss, “[b]illions of dollars flow from rich countries to poor ones every year – and vice versa.” (2011:121) and for most of Africa it has become one of the largest sources of financing over the years (ibid).

William Easterly has in his book “The White Man’s Burden” (2006) discussed what he considers to be the failures of traditional ‘Western’ donors’ approach to foreign aid policies. He claims that the traditional Western approach of aid assistance to world poverty is mistaken. He further makes a distinction between advocates of the traditional approach, whom he refers to as
‘planners’, and advocates of a new alternative approach called ‘searchers’. According to Easterly, many planners still believe in foreign aid strategies that have already been proven to fail. These strategies include plans such as the ‘Big Push’ with its roots in the 1950s where a foreign aid-financed ‘Big Push’ was believed to be able to save poor countries from the poverty trap they were stuck in. In Easterly’s point of view ‘searchers’ are better equipped to establish aid projects that actually lead to positive development. Whether this is true or not is not of interest for this study but Easterly’s distinction between different approaches to foreign aid can be useful in the investigation into what distinguishes EU’s approach from that of China.

3.1.1 ‘Washington Consensus’ versus ‘Beijing Consensus’

In 2004, Joshua Cooper Ramo coined the expression ‘the Beijing Consensus’ as an alternative to the more well established ‘Washington Consensus’. The Washington Consensus was conceived by John Williamson in 1989 and refers to a set of ten policies that guided the US government and international financial institutions’ ideas concerning policy reform at the time. The consensus took a neo-liberal view on globalization and emphasized “macroeconomic stability and integration into the international economy” (WHO, 2015) as the road to reach economic growth. These ideas were considered controversial at the time but they were still implemented through conditionality as part of the guidelines established by the World Bank and the IMF (ibid). Williamson’s policy for economic reform was originally set up to address the case of Latin America and it included policy actions such as; fiscal discipline, reordering public expenditure priorities away from non-merit subsidies toward public goods (such as health and education), tax reform, liberalized interest rate, a competitive exchange rate, trade liberalization, liberalization of inward foreign direct investment, privatization, deregulation to ease barriers of firms for entry and exit of sectors, and strong protection of property rights (Kennedy, 2010: 463). Later on these policies were also introduced to other developing regions as they were believed to be a “one size fits all” (Zhao, 2010: 420) solution for economic growth. The original Washington Consensus as introduced by Williamson only focused on economic policies, however the term was later expanded to include aspects such as liberal democracy and free market as part of the goals of modernization (ibid). Numerous actors seem to hold different interpretations of what the consensus actually stands for and what it strives to achieve. Yet, there seems to be a large agreement among scholars that the approach outlined by the Washington Consensus has not proven to be very successful in creating development and sustainable economic growth (ibid) and some would even go as far as to state that the consensus has “collapsed” (Kennedy, 2010: 466).
Over the years an abundance of literature has addressed this issue and suggested a variety of alternative strategies to development, where Ramo’s ‘Beijing Consensus’ is one of the more prominent ones and is considered to be fundamentally different from Williamson’s approach. In Ramo’s point of view the Washington Consensus tends to tell “other nations how to run themselves” (2004: 4) while the Beijing consensus rather takes its departure in the individual (sic) and with a focus on equality it explores new ideas about citizenship as well as emphasizing the importance of technical innovation among other issues. According to Ramo, the “Beijing Consensus is as much about social change as economic change” (ibid: 4) and offers an alternative approach for developing countries striving for modernization and economic growth. Based on three theorems, as he puts it, the Beijing Consensus addresses how developing countries should be organized in the world. The first theorem addresses the value of innovation and the need to create “change that moves faster than the problems change creates” (ibid: 12). The second theorem tries to look beyond per capita GDP growth and stresses the need of a development model that instead focuses on quality of life, sustainability and equality. Thirdly the consensus is based on a theory of self-determination for all countries rather than the domination of a few hegemonic powers (ibid).

The theoretical framework of the Beijing Consensus was originally created to explain the development and economic growth experienced in China but it can also be seen as a model for other developing countries aspiring to develop and modernize their nations. It is important to mention however that opinions diverge concerning the Beijing Consensus. Supporters welcome it as an alternative for “countries of the South […] to follow their own political direction, and find partners, states as well as businesses” of their own choice to cooperate with (Zhao, 2010: 421). Critics on the other hand question the validity of the consensus as it is invented by an outsider and not even China itself follows its tenets (ibid).1

Neither consensuses originally focuses on foreign aid, but in their article Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013) sets out to compare the two consensuses in this aspect. They compare China’s aid to Africa with that of the OECD countries, where the former is considered to embody the Beijing Consensus while the latter is a proponent of the Washington Consensus. The authors present what they consider to be the similarities and differences between the two consensuses when it comes to foreign aid. Their definitions of the two consensuses correspond with the definitions as described above but their distinction between the two is rather unbalanced (see Table I). The authors claim that the Washington Consensus “delegitimizes the voices of the poor and of

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1 See article by Kennedy (2010) for further criticism toward the Beijing Consensus.
nations through the mechanisms of global domination” (ibid: 739) while the Beijing Consensus “ensures mutual benefits, while also satisfying the principles of inalienable Universal Human Rights” (ibid: 739). In their view the Chinese approach to aid creates self-sustainable development and is better equipped for the particular problems African states face. The approach of the Washington Consensus on the other hand is based on a paternalistic structure, unable to promote social-economic development and address issues that undermine political stability. The authors have presented what they see as the similarities and differences between the two approaches in a table which will be used as part of the theoretical framework for this thesis (see Table I).

Table I

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>What/how?</th>
<th>Washington Consensus</th>
<th>Beijing Consensus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric</td>
<td>Aid non-particular nor is it path-dependent. No solutions addressing the massive human and economic costs of inequality and capabilities deprivation.</td>
<td>Pragmatism involving a commitment to self-directed development and ownership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>More centralistic, less flexible, and more dependent on markets instead of governments approach.</td>
<td>Flexible to localized designs for specific circumstances. More dependent on both sides. Grass-root movement and mutual benefit – less market orientation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortcomings and speed of disbursement</td>
<td>Less effective or efficient, with slower costs and less quickly implemented due to a great number of imposed conditionality; recipients without a compass to guide themselves in the throns of an increasingly complex aid framework.</td>
<td>More efficient, lower costs, and faster without the political, economic, social, and cultural constraints of conditionality. This safeguards bureaucratic procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission and objective</td>
<td>Tool for expanding markets and protecting interests as it must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, control everywhere, establish connections everywhere and destroy cultures everywhere.</td>
<td>Promotes mutual benefits, productive sector and social sector projects in country needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid freedom</td>
<td>Restrictive policy space (i.e. more conditionality) and lowers political sovereignty of recipients.</td>
<td>Provides more policy space (i.e. lower conditionality) and increases the bargaining power by mutual respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transaction costs</td>
<td>Compounds bureaucracy and has higher transaction costs.</td>
<td>Less bureaucracy and less complicated procedure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core framework</td>
<td>Actively promotes principles of liberalization, privatization, and deregulation, espousing free-market capitalism.</td>
<td>Human rights driven. Project designed with mutual interest of all parties considered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Table taken from Babaci - Wilhite et al. (2013: 733).

3.2 Theoretical framework

Many of the member states of the European Union are also members of the OECD\(^2\) and one could therefore suppose that the EU’s aid approach to Africa might share a few similarities with that of OECD countries. One could therefore claim that the EU as well would be considered as

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\(^2\) The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has today 34 member countries from all parts of the globe (OECD – I, 2015). It works closely with governments worldwide to “promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world” (OECD - II, 2015).
a representative of the Washington Consensus when it comes to foreign aid to Africa. It would thus be of interest to see to what degree this distinction between the so called Washington Consensus and the Beijing Consensus as defined by Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013) holds true also in the case of China and the EU in Zimbabwe. In my opinion, Babaci-Wilhite and her colleagues are quick to jump to conclusions in their article as many claims are made without reference to sound empirical evidence. Empirically based examinations into this distinction between the different approaches to foreign aid would therefore be beneficial as it might provide a more nuanced picture. The authors’ distinction between the two consensuses is not entirely neutral in its description and it is clear that they are advocates of the Beijing Consensus. It can hence prove useful to apply their framework on a specific empirical case study as this one as it might serve to pinpoint certain shortcomings in the definitions and distinctions of the two consensuses made by Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013) in Table I. The framework presented by the authors, as seen in Table I, will thus serve as a tool for comparing China and the EU, to thereby establish whether the differences between the two really are as clear as stated by Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013) when it comes to the case of Zimbabwe.

However, based on the descriptions provided by the authors in Table I, certain areas are deemed too difficult to address within this thesis. To start with, what the authors call ‘Transaction costs’ is inadequate in its description as it is unclear what the authors want to include and exclude with this distinction. As the article gives no more explanation of the meaning behind the term I find it problematic to include this aspect in my study. Likewise so with the distinction concerning ‘Shortcomings and speed of disbursement’. Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013) gives no explanation of what they consider to be “less” or “more” effective and efficient, thereby making it difficult for other scholars to replicate the study due to the lack of clarity regarding how to measure this point of distinction. With regards to conditionality, which the authors include in both this point as well as under ‘Aid freedom’, I believe that I will be able to capture this issue within the questions presented in my own analytical framework, as will be presented shortly. With that said, both ‘Transaction costs’ as well as ‘Shortcomings and speed of disbursement’ will be excluded from my theoretical framework and my comparison of the Washington and the Beijing Consensus when it comes to the EU and China.
3.3 Defining Foreign Aid

To be able to conduct this study it is important to discuss how foreign aid is defined in this paper, to thereby determine where the focus of the study should be. According to DAC\(^3\) “Aid activities include projects and programmes, cash transfers, deliveries of goods, training courses, research projects, debt relief operations and contributions to non-governmental organisations.” (OECD - IV, 2015). Donors often also speak about ‘Official Development Assistance’ (ODA) which refers to loans or grants to countries or multilateral organizations “undertaken by the official sector, with promotion of economic development and welfare as the main objectives” (ibid). Technical cooperation is also included in ODA but assistance for military purposes or payments to private individuals is excluded (ibid). This form of assistance is the typical approach of Western donors, it is however not the case when it comes to China, even if it shares a few similarities with DAC’s definition of ODA. Nonetheless, certain important aspects of its aid assistance would be lost if one were to use this definition. China gives for example assistance, both financial and other forms, toward military purposes and it also gives “loans in support of some joint venture investments by Chinese companies” (Bräutigam, 2011:5), something that would not be considered as ODA in DAC’s definition. Some claim that China takes a ‘holistic’ approach to foreign aid which amalgamates a wide range of interests such as the state, businesses, labor and resources to serve one united goal or objective as defined by the government. With this approach “China uses grants, loans, and debt relief alongside commercial investments and preferential trade access in order to gain access to strategic resources assets or to build stronger political ties” (Kachiga, 2013: 138).

With this in mind foreign aid will for the purpose of this thesis be defined as; Allocation of projects and programs, transfer of cash, personnel and deliveries of goods as well as the establishment of training courses and research projects with the assistance of outside actors. Aid also includes support to NGOs, private or state-owned companies, and aid to the military sector.

\(^3\) The heart of the OECD the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is an international forum, consisting of both OECD members and organisations such as the World Bank, IMF and the UNDP. It has as its mandate to contribute sustainable development, economic growth and poverty reduction among other things (OECD – III, 2015).
4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Qualitative text analysis

In order to reach the objective of this study a qualitative text analysis will be implemented. A text analysis is about actively reading a text and posing questions to it with the aim of establishing whether the text, or one self in the role of a researcher, is able to answer these questions (Esaiasson et al., 2012: 210-226). The research process is guided by the main research question, but smaller more detailed questions are posed to the text as part of the methodological framework. These questions are there to help the researcher identify the essential aspects of a material and thereby reach the purpose of the study. In a sense it is quite an open approach as one has to remain open to where a text might lead, as new considerations might arise while reading certain materials. Moreover, one has to keep the specific context in which a text was written, as well as who the author is, in mind when considering its meaning (ibid). To better understand this broad methodological approach Esaiasson and colleagues (2012) divides text analysis into two main types; those aiming to systematize the content of a text and those with the aim of critically reviewing the content. Each of these can furthermore be divided into three subcategories with either a descriptive or an explanatory purpose (ibid).

This method can also be called ethnographic content analysis (Bryman, 2012: 557-559), which is open to the possibility of redefining its initial approach along the way as a text might lead the researcher in a new direction. In this sense the approach involves a “movement back and forth between conceptualization, data collection, analysis, and interpretation” (ibid: 559) which can prove useful in my specific type of study as this continues movement may allow me to capture more central aspects of my actors’ foreign aid engagements as it allows me to approach the texts and material from quite an open perspective.

4.2 Analytical Framework

As this thesis serves a descriptive purpose a so called systematizing text analysis (Esaiasson et al., 2012) will be the more specific method of use. The objective here is to make visible and clarify the essence of a specific text or material under investigation to gain a better understanding of the specific actors (ibid). In other words, it is the actors, in this case the EU and China, who are of interest for this study and not the larger debate surrounding foreign aid. One could therefore claim this study to be ‘actor centered’ rather than ‘idea centered’ (ibid). By focusing on the actors I hope to gain an understanding of what is their specific focus with aid assistance and how their approaches differ from each other. With that said, both the rhetoric of
the actors as well as the actual actions and projects initiated by them are of interest since these two aspects do not always correspond.

As a complement to the text analysis an informant interview will be conducted with Sten Rylander, former Swedish Diplomat to Zimbabwe between the years of 2006 - 2010. Due to his vast experience, both of Zimbabwe especially and of the African continent as a whole, as well as of aid work in general, I believe that he might provide insight and deeper understanding of the two actors under examination in this study and of Zimbabwe as a country.

As already mentioned a few smaller, more detailed questions derived from the overarching research question have been formed and will serve as the analytical tool for this study. They will serve as a guide for the research process and help to make sure that crucial aspects of the material are not overlooked. These questions are loosely based on the analytical framework developed by Dorothy McCormick (2008). The purpose of her framework is to investigate the impact of aid from China and India to Africa, but parts of it can be just as useful for the process of describing differences between different actors within the foreign aid sector. These questions are also complemented by questions formulated especially with the purpose of my study in mind:

- What type of aid do donors provide and which policy sectors do they support?
- Do donors put any terms or conditions on their aid?
- Which are the main channels through which donors cooperate with the recipient country?
- Can any similarities to the principles of the Beijing- or Washington Consensus be found within the actors’ approach?

4.3 Material

To reach the purpose of this thesis a wide range of material and sources will be used. One of the primary sources will be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China where documents concerning their relationship with Africa, and especially with Zimbabwe, will be of interest. The main documents will be the so called ‘China’s African Policy’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 2006) and the ‘China White Paper on Foreign Aid’ (Information Office of the state Council, 2011) which will be complemented with statements made by state officials concerning Zimbabwe and foreign aid. These two documents have been selected as they symbolize the base of China’s foreign policy to Africa and their policy toward foreign aid. These documents are also frequently referred to by other scholars.
which points toward their centrality and importance. With regards to the case of China certain limitations are inevitable since there is only a restricted number of documents and information available in English, therefore all documents available on the webpage of the Foreign Ministry of the People’s Republic of China concerning Zimbabwe will be assessed. The use of translated material can be risky as fundamental aspects might be lost in the translation process, however this is an unavoidable disadvantage in this case.

In the case of the European Union documents and statements made by both the European Commission and the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Zimbabwe will pose as the primary sources of interest. The main documents under examination are the ‘National Indicative Programme’ (European Commission – I, 2015), the documents concerning the ‘Annual Action Plan’ for 2015 (European Commission - II, 2015) and the ‘European Consensus on Development’ (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006). These documents have been selected as they make up the foundation for aid cooperation between the EU and Zimbabwe, and are the documents which most statements by the former refers to when addressing its aid actions in Zimbabwe. Information, documents and statements found at the website of both the European Commission and the Delegation of the European Union to Zimbabwe will also be examined. Official statements from both donors may also be gathered from interviews made with media outlets such as newspaper articles, radio programs or documentaries.

The study will be confined to the time period from the land reforms in 2002 up until December of 2015, with a main focus on the developments of the last couple of years and the current situation. This timespan is beneficial as it allows for a narrowing of the width of plausible material under scrutiny, while highlighting a very interesting time period for understanding the situation in Zimbabwe today.

Lastly, scientific articles and research papers made on the topic will also be used as a complement to these types of material. By closely reading articles from relevant scholars and researchers on the subject area and comparing their statements with public statements, speeches and reports by China and the EU I hope to gain a more nuanced and unbiased picture of the actors as well as clarify certain tendencies specific actors might have to portray themselves in a certain light. Furthermore, since the availability of Chinese aid statistics is limited and as they are not particularly open with regard to what type of aid projects they support, articles by other scholars will be used to gain a better understanding of China’s foreign assistance to Zimbabwe. First of all, the book chapter by Zhang (2011) will be used to gain a better insight into China’s aid influence on the African continent as a whole and get an overview of China as a donor.
Likewise Hodzi et al. (2012), Alao (2014), Chun (2014) and parts of Kachiga’s (2013) book, will provide a better insight into the relationship between China and Zimbabwe specifically.

4.4 Case selection

The EU is quite a unique donor in the sense that it is both a bilateral and a multilateral donor of foreign aid and assistance (Carbone, 2007). They are also the largest donor of development aid in the world and provides more than 50 percent of assistance worldwide, a large part donated to Africa (European External Action Service, 2015). China on the other hand is rather new on the donor market but their role is increasing in strength and importance rapidly which is changing the dynamics within the donor community. They offer an interesting alternative for developing countries, tired of the traditional set up of a donor-recipient relationship. These two basic facts make up the base for the case selection in this thesis and this dynamic becomes even more interesting when one looks at the case of Zimbabwe. As already mentioned both actors have been actively involved in Zimbabwe since the 1980s, which benefits this comparison since they by now are well established as donors in the country. The situation currently in Zimbabwe also illustrates why it is an interesting point of comparison for these two actors. The UN Human Development Report from 2014 places Zimbabwe in the category of ‘low human development’ on place 156 out of 187 countries (UNDP, 2014) and the countries longstanding relationship with both donors, as well as its high level of aid dependency, makes it a valid case for gaining a better understanding of China and the EU in their roles as donors of foreign aid.

5. ANALYSIS

5.1 The EU in Africa

In 2006 the Member states of the European Union together with the European Parliament, Council and Commission agreed on a common development agenda (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006) that directs its joint development strategies and foreign aid initiatives toward developing countries. With common objectives and principles for development cooperation the policy states that the main objective of the EU’s development assistance is to eradicate poverty. Through their interaction with developing countries the EU wants to promote “common values of: respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, peace, democracy, good governance, gender equality, the rule of law, solidarity and justice” (ibid: 3). The cooperation with developing countries should be based on a sense of ownership and partnership with the aim of strengthening the participation of civil society, improving gender equality and empowering women (ibid).
As already mentioned the EU has provided development assistance to Zimbabwe since 1980. The turbulence of the early 2000s has not changed this but rather restructured the relationship as the EU for a length of time chose to provide assistance solely through non-governmental channels (European Commission - III, 2015). These developments, taking place in 2002, were a result of serious human rights violations as well as violations of the freedom of association, opinion and of peaceful assembly. Hence the EU decided that ‘appropriate measures’ had to be taken toward Zimbabwe (European Union Delegation to the Republic of Zimbabwe - I, 2015). According to the EU the measures were moreover a reaction to the government of Zimbabwe’s attempt to prevent free and fair elections from taking place. The measures taken included “the suspension of financing of budgetary support and support for projects, as well as the suspension of the signature of the 9th EDF National Indicative Programme” (ibid). The restrictive measures remained in place for ten years before the EU, in 2012, decided to revise the list and removed visa bans and asset freezes put on 51 individuals and 20 entities while 112 individuals and 11 entities remained blacklisted (ibid). Over the years revisions have been made to these lists and individuals and entities have been excused from it as the government of Zimbabwe, since the establishment of the Government of National Unity (GNU)4, have proven that positive measures are taken towards these issues. Still a few persons, such as President Robert Mugabe and his wife, remain under restrictive measures.

As part of the positive development under the GNU the European Union has decided to revise its initiatives to the country and signed what is called the ‘National Indicative Programme’ (NIP)5 with the government of Zimbabwe in February 2015 (European Commission – I, 2015). The NIP is a guide for how the cooperation between the two actors will work during the period 2014-2020. The document was signed by Philippe Van Damme, head of the European Union Delegation to Zimbabwe, and Willard L. Manungo, Secretary of the Treasury for the Government of Zimbabwe. The NIP concerns EU’s aid to Zimbabwe and states that they are agreeing to assist the country with €234 million over the period of implementation. According to the EU the ultimate objective of the NIP is to try and normalize the relationship with

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4 The term GNU refers to when all the major political parties in a country form a governing coalition. In the case of Zimbabwe this major parties, ZANU-PF, MDC-T and MDC-M signed an agreement which established a Government of National Unity in 2009 as a result of both political and economic crisis (Mukuhlani, 2014).

5 NIP’s constitute the backbone of the European Development Fund’s (EDF) cooperation with ACP countries and is funded by contributions from EU member states. They are five year programs for cooperation between the EU and an individual country where both sides together decide the timetable for implementation, aid objectives of programs, sectoral project commitments and the forecast of the distribution of funds. The main objectives of NIP’s are to work toward poverty alleviation and integration into the regional and world economy (Orjiako, 2001).
Zimbabwe and thereby support the “country’s aspirations which include consolidation of democracy, peace and stability, prosperity and sustainable development” (ibid: 6).

5.2 China in Africa

Foreign aid in the case of China is closely connected to the country’s foreign policy. Based on the ‘Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence’ the foreign policy highlight mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference, equality and mutual benefit, and lastly peaceful coexistence (Zhang, 2011). As stated by China’s Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Ming “China-Africa cooperation offers a model featuring equality and real results […] based on mutual respect and equality without imposing our own will on each other” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 2014).

As mentioned, China’s form of foreign aid is slightly different from the DAC’s definition as they take a more holistic approach which together with the fact that China does not publish country-specific aid statistics makes it hard to estimate the exact amount of aid they give in comparison to other donors (Kachiga, 2013). Nonetheless, some estimates are frequently made and in the years 1989-1992 China’s ODA to Africa was US$310 million which has since increased to roughly US$ 1-1.5 billion in 2004-2005. No criteria for how aid is calculated in this estimation has been made public by China but foreign aid seem to be defined and carried out around the framework of South-South cooperation (Zhang, 2011). This framework refers to cooperation between developing countries in political, economic, social, cultural, environmental or technical issues. It can range from sharing knowledge, skills or even resources to achieve their respective goals and aspirations. Decisions should be made by countries of the South where respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefits are held as the guiding principles of cooperation initiatives (UNOSSC, 2015).

In 2006 China’s ‘African Policy’ was put in place with the aspiration of presenting China’s policy and intentions towards Africa to the rest of the world. The policy corresponds well with the principles of South-South cooperation and it is based on four principles which make up the foundation of the strategic partnership between Africa and China. The first principle is ‘Sincerity, friendship and equality’ where an emphasis is put on China’s respect for African countries’ “independent choice of the road of development” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 2006). Secondly ‘Mutual benefit, reciprocity and common prosperity’ is highlighted as the way to carry out economic and social development that will promote mutual prosperity. Thirdly ‘Mutual support and close coordination’ where China for
example claims to strive toward strengthening cooperation with Africa in multilateral organizations such as the UN. Lastly the policy highlights the need to ‘Learn from each other and seek common development’ where both countries can benefit from each other’s experiences in a wide range of fields (ibid).

Chris Alden (2005) further addresses an interesting point when it comes to China’s development cooperation with the African continent; the fact that China has turned into a role model for African countries by illustrating what an alternative development model to that of the Western world can look like. China, with their rapid economic growth and development in a wide range of areas are transforming into a major player on the international stage, while still managing to maintain a strongly centralized governing structure. This fact can explain why they are considered a more interesting path to strive toward for many African nations and as put by Alden “China’s rapid rise to power is also appealing for African leaders who are desperately looking for models of success that do not threaten established regime interests” (ibid: 156).

5.3 Results
5.3.1 Type of Aid and Policy Sectors

It becomes quite obvious that both donors often support similar policy sectors and a resemblance can also be noticed in the type of aid projects initiated by the two donors.

The EU provides development assistance in a few different ways such as through “project aid, sector programme support, sector and general budget support, humanitarian aid and assistance in crisis prevention, support to and via the civil society, approximation of norms, standards and legislation, etc.” (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006: 5). The majority of foreign aid provided by the EU however comes in the form of grants (ibid).

The NIP signed between Zimbabwe and the EU states that the sectors chosen for the program have been jointly selected by the two parties and consist of the health sector, economic development based on sustainable agriculture and strengthening of institutional capacities which will contribute to the promotion of good governance and lastly to provide support of civil society alongside other support measures. Attention will also be paid to issues related to gender, youth, vulnerable groups and migration. The document furthermore highlights the importance of ‘Information and Communication Technology’ (ICT) as a tool for sustainable development (European Commission – I, 2015). However, out of these sectors the health sector is the one to receive most support. € 55 million has for example been given to the Health Transition Fund 2015 and the Health Development Fund 2016-2020 (European Union Delegation to the Republic of Zimbabwe - II, 2015) which is “aimed at protecting the population against the most
important health threats, in particular those at the root of maternal and child mortality; strengthening national health systems at provincial and district levels; and promoting equal access to health services by supporting the necessary reforms on health financing and governance’’ (ibid).

In 2015 the European Commission also announced the ‘Annual Action Programme’ for Zimbabwe, which falls under the commitment of the NIP, with the objective to “reduce and eventually eradicate poverty and to support peace and stability by improving health outcomes for the population; enhancing resilience, food security and reducing under-nutrition in children; maintaining macro-economic stability; contributing to the establishment of a migration governance framework; and putting in place measures to support the programming, preparation and implementation of the actions [decided] under the 11th EDF NIP’’ (European Commission – IV, 2015: 2). This action plan consists of five specific actions which are: improving health outcomes for the population in Zimbabwe, a public finance management enhancement program, promoting migration governance, supporting the National Authorizing Office and Technical Cooperation Facility, and lastly resilience building and food nutrition security programs in the country (European Commission – II, 2015).

As mentioned the EU provides aid in a broad range of forms and did so even during the strained period of imposed sanctions, then mainly in the form of humanitarian aid as well as to projects directly supporting the population. During this period, from 2002 to 2010, the European Commission provided €572 million in humanitarian- and essential development aid (European Commission, 2010). An example of what this type of financial support has achieved can be found at the European Commission’s website and include actions such as distribution of textbooks in schools, improving the availability of medicines and medical staff throughout the country, supporting farmers, and improving access to water and sanitation (European Commission - III, 2015).

In the case of the China-Zimbabwe relationship aid is not the main focus, as other forms of cooperation often take precedence. With that said, foreign aid and assistance is still present. During the period from 2005-2013 US$ 103 million were provided in the form of ODA through actions such as grants, concessional loans and contributions to multilateral cooperation initiatives, such as the World Food Programme (Chun, 2014). One could divide aid offered by the Chinese government into eight types, namely in the form of “complete projects, goods and materials, technical cooperation, human resource development cooperation, medical teams sent abroad, emergency humanitarian aid, volunteer programs in foreign countries and debt relief” (Information Office of the State Council, 2011: 6). China has furthermore constructed both
schools and hospitals in Zimbabwe over the years (Chun, 2014) while also supporting small and medium sized enterprises that produce products such as textile, soap, and tile, as well as to the Zambabwean Iron and Steel Company (Kachiga, 2013:120-128). Furthermore Chinese aid to Zimbabwe includes tied aid loans, export credits and tied export credits as well as military aid (Hodzi et al., 2012).

Similarly to the EU, the health sector is considered important by China and assistance is provided in the form of sending medical teams to work in the country, both in rural and urban areas, and thereby contributing to improving the accessibility to health care services (Hodzi et al., 2012). Zimbabwe moreover enjoys Chinese influence in a wide range of sectors such as; mining, construction, agriculture, telecommunication and retail (Alao, 2014). With that said, the agriculture sector is the one of focal interest for China and a range of aid programs have been implemented within this sector. Emergency food aid is one such, so is donations to agricultural machinery as well as the implementation of a wide range of training programs and field visits where Chinese experts accompany Zimbabwean officials in the field and sharing experience and expertise (Alao, 2014).

The military sector is also part of China-Zimbabwe cooperation, enjoying support in the form of arms export to Zimbabwe, but there are also claims being made that the government of Zimbabwe has signed a deal with China for the construction of a National Defense College (NDC) in exchange for diamonds (Hodzi et al., 2012). The construction company is Chinese and the building materials are supposedly sourced in China as well. Furthermore, “the deal instructs that only Chinese personnel should be employed in key posts during the [NDC’s] construction” (ibid: 89). This way of conducting projects is typical of China and corresponds with their own description of how ‘complete projects’ are intended to be carried out. As stated in its policy on foreign aid “The Chinese side is responsible for the whole or part of the process, from study, survey, to design and construction, provides all or part of the equipment and building materials, and sends engineers and technical personnel to organize and guide the construction, installation and trial production of these projects” (Information Office of the State Council, 2011: 6). First after this is completed are projects handed over to the recipient country, in this case to Zimbabwe. Moreover, China has a lot of stakes invested in the mining sector and a lot of projects seem to be implemented toward maintaining a stable engagement in this sector (Hodzi et al., 2012).

Where the two actors truly diverge is when it comes to support toward institution development and strengthening of the governance structures in Zimbabwe. For the EU this is an important policy sector and they are actively engaged within this area. China on the other
hand, with their highly valued principle of non-intervention in domestic politics, generally abstain from exerting influence in this sector area.

5.3.2 Terms or Conditions

One could argue that the often acclaimed lack of conditionality connected to Chinese foreign aid initiatives is false. What becomes obvious when investigating the case of Zimbabwe is that foreign aid from the EU and China are both accompanied by certain terms and conditions, only that the types of conditions imposed on the recipient are rather different depending on the donor and seem to serve very different goals. The typical definition of conditionality refers to the idea “that a country must meet certain criteria” (WHO, 2016) to gain access to aid and foreign assistance.

Typical conditionality from the EU can be implemented in either a positive manner, such as promises of benefits if recipient countries meet the conditions, or negative, in the sense that it leads to a reduction or suspension of benefits if recipient countries do not comply with the conditions (Del Biondo, 2009). In the case of Zimbabwe the restrictive measures imposed on the government by the EU can be considered as a negative form of conditionality. The EU is firm promoters of ‘good governance’ and according to Ian Taylor “the EU tends to export to third countries the EU model of political and economic development based upon economic liberalization and the rule of [the] free market, democratic norms and practices, and human rights protection” (2011: 127). In statements made by the European Commission in 2006 the EU partnership with developing countries should promote common values such as “respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, peace, democracy, good governance, gender equality, the rule of law, solidarity and justice” (ibid: 127) which then illustrates what recipients have to strive to achieve in order to maintain a healthy aid relationship with the EU.

In the case of China it is often claimed that they do not put conditions on foreign aid as it goes against their principle of sovereignty and non-intervention in internal affairs as stated in its ‘African Policy’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 2006). However, according to Hodzi et al. (2012) China does actually put conditions on its aid, only it is not conditions that promote good governance, respect of human rights or for example institutional reforms like the conditions put forward by Western donors normally. China’s conditions are rather “meant to secure Chinese interests as well as further China’s diplomatic and domestic policy goals” (ibid:91). This is justified by pointing out that “China still has a large ‘poverty-stricken population’ and it would therefore be unwise to think that it would simply hand out aid without an expectation of a return” (ibid: 91). This justification can also
explain why many projects are tied in the sense that either Chinese companies have to be employed as contractors or that at least 50 percent of the materials used in a project have to come from China (ibid). Likewise it is not uncommon that the labor force employed to carry out the construction of certain projects is imported from China as well. Furthermore, one of the most fundamental conditions put forward by China is the need of recipients to comply with the ‘One China’ Policy. This policy maintains that there is only one China and that Taiwan is part of China and not recognized as an independent state. This means that countries whom recognize Taiwan will not be given any aid or assistance by the People’s Republic of China. Also Kachiga (2013) talks about conditionality and claim that even in the early days of the newly independent Zimbabwe China demanded some sort of exchange for its economic aid, for example, in the form of goods such as sugar and tobacco.

One last example, of terms that need to be met by the recipient in order to gain Chinese assistance, can be found in the signing of a loan deal between China and Zimbabwe in 2011. The deal amounted to nearly US$700 million and in exchange for this deal the Chinese government wanted Chinese companies to be protected from the nationalization plans that Mugabe’s government had announced. This nationalization plan proclaimed that for companies worth more than US$500,000 51 percent of the ownership had to be allocated to local shareholders. In connection to this announcement it was also announced that a Chinese-owned alluvial diamond mine would be exempt from the nationalization process (Alao, 2014).

By these examples it is clear that both actors’ aid initiatives are accompanied by certain terms and conditions. Sure, as China clearly states in its policy on foreign aid, it is determined to provide assistance that is not connected to any political conditionality (Information Office of the State Council, 2011) and one could claim that to a large extent they succeed with this commitment. However, other conditions are clearly present and as illustrated by the actions taken toward the nationalization process implemented by the Zimbabwean government, in certain instances the distinction of what should be considered as politically based terms and conditions is not as obvious as one might think. In this case the terms that recipients of Chinese assistance have to abide by do not serve a higher purpose such as promoting human rights or its resemblance, as is the case with EU financed projects, but conditionality is still present in the case of both donors.

5.3.3 Main channels of cooperation

Also in this area the differences between the two donors are not as apparent as one might think. Since the establishment of the GNU and the adoption of a new constitution in Zimbabwe
a shift in the EU’s development assistance has been noticed as the organization has started to change its long held strategy of mainly channeling aid through NGOs and Multilateral organizations and is instead establishing channels for better cooperation with the government (Smith, 2015). The NIP is one clear example of this change of method as it is adapted in collaboration with the government of Zimbabwe. A reason for this change in approach can be found in David Smith’s article in the Guardian where a “Western source” who wants to remain anonymous said to him that “After 12 years of sanctions, we have realised it is not going to work,[…] We do not have enough leverage to induce reform. Let’s try another way by engaging with the government in a more positive way rather than standing on the sidelines” (Smith, 2015). However, despite this change in strategy support in certain sector areas is still implemented and administered through the assistance of other multilateral actors such as the UN or the World Bank (European Union Delegation to the Republic of Zimbabwe - II, 2015). The actions taken in the Health Sector under the ‘Annual Action Plan’ are for example implemented in collaboration with UNICEF (ibid). Some of the other actions taken under this plan are managed indirectly in collaboration with both the UNDP, FAO (see Action 5 in European Commission – II, 2015) and the World Bank (see Action 2 in ibid) while others (see Action 4 in ibid) are managed indirectly via the government of Zimbabwe (ibid). Even though positive cooperation with the government is developing, support is still given to the NGO community as well. In this way one can conclude that even though the EU has moved toward channeling its aid more through the government of Zimbabwe than solely through the NGO community it still prefers in certain instances to cooperate via other organizations than directly on a bilateral basis with the government of Zimbabwe. It is therefore hard to determine what the main channels through which the EU distribute foreign aid to the country are.

China has always cooperated well directly with the government of Zimbabwe, which it the main channel through which most of China’s foreign aid projects are implemented. However, it also cooperates with international organisations such as the UN6 in the implementation of aid projects and support to Zimbabwe, for example via actions administrated by the WFP (Chun, 2014). A lot of projects are also carried out by support directly to Chinese firms working in Zimbabwe. According to Alao this is a strategic choice adopted by China to reduce the risk of

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6 An interesting point to make, which is not connected to foreign aid but rather highlights a further dimension of the relationship between China and Zimbabwe can be found within the actions taken by China within the UN Security Council. On two occasions China has used its veto power to prevent restrictions and sanctions from being imposed on ZANU-PF top Officials (Chun, 2014).
corruption, as by supporting and employing Chinese firms to carry out aid initiatives it decreases the risk of aid money ending up in the pockets of the ruling elite (2014: 81).

5.3.4 Beijing- or Washington Consensus

If we are to use the distinctions made by Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013) (see Table I) between the Beijing and the Washington Consensus it appears as if both China and the EU adhere more to the Beijing Consensus than the Washington Consensus. However, distinguishing between the two consensuses and the actions taken by our donors is a bit complicated and in certain areas one could argue that both donors actually seem to sympathise more with the Washington Consensus.

By looking at the first distinction made by Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013), namely ‘Rhetoric’, it is possible to argue that the EU falls under the Beijing Consensus. As stated in the European Consensus on Development the EU aspires to “[w]here circumstances permit, […] strengthen ownership, support partner’s national accountability and procedures” (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006: 5). Also the move by the EU to engage in cooperation with the government of Zimbabwe under the framework of the NIP points toward a commitment to ‘self-directed development and ownership’. Likewise does the involvement with civil society, as the citizens of a state should be included in decisions regarding the direction of the development of their nation. With regards to China it is harder to determine whether its rhetoric corresponds with the Beijing or Washington Consensus. One could argue that the way in which China implements its aid projects, especially construction projects, rather harms the capability of the local population. Since China often imports its labour force from China, as well as materials and expertise, Zimbabweans are excluded from the opportunity of employment and all the benefits associated with meaningful work. This could furthermore be considered as a limitation of ownership since, even if aid projects are decided on in accordance with the government of Zimbabwe, the local population might feel excluded from the ownership of the project when it is implemented in the Chinese way. At the same time one could not argue that China’s rhetoric concerning foreign aid falls completely within the scope of the Washington Consensus. The projects implemented by China in Zimbabwe do address major issues related to human and economic costs of inequality and their foreign aid has been beneficial for large parts of the country which is not considered to be the case of the Washington Consensus according to Babaci-Wilhite et al (2013).

With regards to ‘Focus’ the EU seems to adhere more to the Washington Consensus as their engagements seems less flexible and centralized. However, one could argue that this might be
due to the structure of the European Union and the fact that decision making and execution of projects by such a large organisation by default is less flexible. However, claiming the EU to be more dependent on markets than of recipient governments seems unfair based on the comparison made in this thesis. With a closer look at the ‘European Consensus on Development’ the EU clearly state that its development cooperation strives to be ‘tailor-made’ “based on the country’s own needs, strategies, priorities and assets” (European Parliament, Commission, Council, 2006: 9). With that said, it becomes evident that a distinction of the focus behind aid strategies of the EU cannot be as easily made as one might have thought. If the EU in its actions manages to follow this highly held principle of ‘tailor-made’ foreign aid one could definitely claim it to be ‘flexible to localized design for specific circumstances’ which is the focus of the Beijing Consensus (Babaci-Wilhite et al., 2013). On the other hand one can clearly see how the relationship between Zimbabwe and China is based on a process of give and take, in accordance to how Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013) identifies the focus of the Beijing Consensus to be “more dependent on both sides” (see Table I). China’s ‘African Policy’ time and again states the objective of achieving mutual benefits for both sides, which is in line with what the focus of the Beijing Consensus. However, to insist that China is concerned with grass-root movements or less market oriented than the EU in the case of Zimbabwe is a stretch, which challenges this conclusion of its focus belonging solely to the Beijing Consensus.

With regard to the ‘Mission and objective’ of the two consensuses China’s actions again, at least as stated in the ‘African Policy’ and the foreign aid policy, promotes mutual benefits and they clearly engage in productive sectors. However, one could question whether this is done with the recipient country’s need in mind. As already discussed, a lot of the aid projects introduced by China in Zimbabwe seem to serve a Chinese agenda and promote Chinese foreign policy goals. The fact that such a large focus is given toward the agriculture sector could arguably be because of the domestic need of the Chinese population in the homeland (Hodzi et al., 2012: 89). Likewise, the way missions are carried out by Chinese companies with material imported from China also raises questions of the true objectives of its aid activities in Zimbabwe. With this in mind it is possible to question whether parts of the mission and objectives of China not rather correspond with the Washington Consensus as it uses its involvement as a tool for expanding its market in the country. The large presence of cheap Chinese goods in Zimbabwe, which has debilitated the local market as domestic goods cannot compete with the Chinese prices\(^7\), can also be perceived as an example of this.

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\(^7\) Sten Rylander, former Swedish Ambassador to Zimbabwe, interviewed the 10\(^{th}\) of December 2015, Uppsala.
The case of the EU also raises a few questions. In light of this study one can see how foreign assistance from the EU engages in productive and social sector projects in Zimbabwe which corresponds with the Beijing Consensus. However, the EU does not mention any mutual benefits and one can question the motives behind their aid actions and reflect upon whether a degree of personal interests might be behind certain actions. Likewise, it is hard to believe that the EU has no concerns regarding markets and with that said it might not be possible to isolate their foreign aid approach to simply reflect the Beijing Consensus.

The point concerning ‘Aid freedom’ in Table I can be connected to the discussion concerning terms and conditions addressed above. In light of that one could claim both actors’ aid approaches to fall under the definition of the Washington Consensus as both impose conditions connected to their development assistance. The EU more so even since their conditions are more firmly directed toward reforms concerning governance, which could be considered to intrude on the political sovereignty of the government of Zimbabwe. Nonetheless, is one to believe in the rhetoric of China’s ‘African Policy’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 2006) and foreign aid policy (Information Office of the State Council, 2011), where a large focus is given to the importance of mutual respect, and the lack of political conditionality, it becomes harder to consider China as an upholder of the Washington Consensus in this regard. If the bargaining power of Zimbabwe really is increased by mutual respect from the government of China then this must be considered as behavior in accordance with the Beijing Consensus, but such a conclusion cannot be firmly established solely based on this study as I have no way of examining whether the bargaining power of the Zimbabwean government has increased through cooperation with China or not.

The ‘Core framework’ of the EU could definitely be considered as being ‘human rights driven’ as this is the stated driving principle behind foreign aid instituted by the EU. In light of this study it is hard to claim the aid approach taken by the EU as promoting liberalization, privatization and other neo-liberal values as the Washington Consensus arguably would. Also China must be considered to have a core framework more in line with the Beijing Consensus as its actions is visibly based on mutual interests of all parties. However, neither in its ‘African policy’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 2006) nor in the policy concerning foreign aid (Information Office of the State Council, 2011) does China mention concerns related to human rights. Furthermore, one could argue that the fact that China itself often is accused of showing insufficient respect for human rights decreases the likelihood that it would engage in a foreign policy or aid approach driven by human right concerns.
Nonetheless, China’s core framework when it comes to Zimbabwe must still be considered to be more in line with the Beijing Consensus than the Washington Consensus.

5.4 Discussion

It is clear that the distinction between the two consensuses as established by Babaci-Wilhite et al. (2013) makes for a complicated comparison in the case of China and the EU in Zimbabwe. Based on the analysis conducted for this study it becomes obvious that the theoretical framework presented in the work of Babaci-Willhite et al. (2013) is not adequate for addressing the case of Zimbabwe. As can be seen in ‘Table I’ the similarities and differences between the Washington- and Beijing Consensus presented by the authors are slightly unambiguous, which leads to a somewhat simplified analysis. The fact of the matter is that both China and the EU are too complex as actors to be properly described by this framework. Based on the analysis made in this thesis neither actor answer completely to the definition of either the Washington- or the Beijing Consensus which points toward a weakness in the distinction between the two consensuses in ‘Table I’ to begin with. As neither consensus gives a complete explanation of the actions taken by these two complex actors it would be of interest to examine whether other theoretical frameworks would be better equipped to address and examining European and Chinese foreign aid activities. Worth highlighting is the fact that the Washington- and Beijing Consensus normally do not address foreign aid but is rather used in more economic settings, which might explain why they are not sufficient to capture all aspects of a donor-recipient relationship.

What becomes increasingly apparent is the need to separate what is said from what is actually done, a fact that is important for understanding both of the donors in this study. Aid is often used to promote donors foreign policy agenda and in that sense it tends to be a bit biased and aspire toward rather self-serving goals at times. What becomes obvious through this study is that China is more open regarding this behavior, justifying it with the fact that they themselves are still a developing country to a large extent and therefore have to gain something in return for its aid initiatives (Information office of the State Council, 2011). Beyond that, it is evident that China lacks in terms of transparency with regards to its aid engagements in Zimbabwe. According to Hodzi et al. (2012) development policies, between China and Zimbabwe, are largely agreed upon behind closed doors while the public is excluded from the process which has had a negative impact on political accountability and transparency within the government of Zimbabwe. The EU on the other hand are not open about what personal gains they might receive from giving foreign aid and assistance to Zimbabwe, but they are more transparent with
regards to the transfer of financial aid as well as the aims of, and actions associated with specific projects.

Furthermore, through the process of this thesis another distinction between the two donors has been noticed, concerning what might be considered as the driving principles behind the actors’ aid engagement in Zimbabwe. China repeatedly claims that its aid strategies creates a ‘win-win’ situation for both donor and recipient as both sides benefit from the cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, 2006., Information Office of the State Council, 2011) and this is often voiced as the driving principle for Chinese aid initiatives. However, ‘win-win’ is a debated term as some claim that the only beneficiaries of this type of exchange is the elites on both sides while the local population in the recipient country remain excluded from the benefits (Konflikt, 2015).

The EU on the other hand uses the promotion of values such as democracy, good governance and respect for human rights (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006) as a justification, and driving principle behind its aid activities. One could argue that the EU sees foreign aid as a tool for shaping countries along the lines of what it considers as ‘good development’ while simultaneously stating that it aims to cooperate with recipient countries in a manner of partnership and “respond to partner countries’ priorities” (ibid: 6). Two rather contrarious goal one could claim, and one can question how it is to work in a country like Zimbabwe which is known for its lack of respect for human rights and rights of civil society (Human Rights Watch, 2015) which is of high priority for the EU. In light of these observations one can conclude that a further distinction between our two actors can be identified within their underlying causes for giving aid. However, such underlying causes have not been part of the focus for this study and it would therefore be necessary to conduct additional research and a deeper examination of the driving motives behind the actors aid initiatives to firmly establish such a claim.

Additionally, as already presented adherence to the two consensuses can be found in the case of both donors and I would argue that the similarities outnumber the differences when it comes to China and the EU in their role as donors in Zimbabwe. One of the main differences, which has been addressed already, could arguably be considered to be the involvement within domestic politics. EU clearly state their aim to promote good governance, democratic reform and respect for human rights in the case of Zimbabwe while China stands firmly by its principle of non-intervention. However, resent indications point toward a change in this regard. The high

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8 For further insight into this debate listen to the radio program ‘Konflikt’ (Konflikt, 2015) where both researchers and advocates in the field voice their opinions regarding the term ‘win-win’ and whether it truly delivers ‘win-win’ situations for all.
level of diplomatic involvement, in the form of official state visits from both the Chinese and the Zimbabwean side, could arguably be considered as a vehicle for building political trust and establish a small hold for China within the political realm of the government of Zimbabwe. An illustration of this can be seen in the most resent of state visits conducted by China to the Republic of Zimbabwe. In December 2015 President Xi Jinping made his first state visit to the country and ten agreements related to energy, aviation, telecommunication etcetera were signed (The Guardian - I, 2015). Meanwhile, insinuations were voiced concerning the instability within the government of Zimbabwe and according to Sten Rylander⁹ the Chinese President expressed slight concerns over the lack of clarity regarding the order of succession within ZANU-PF. This could be considered as an indication that China is starting to contemplate the effect internal political conditions can have on aid and trade deals which might be the start of a change in strategy by China, where political considerations and involvement might gain a more influential role in future development deals with Zimbabwe. Moreover, claims have been made that the increased presence of China in Zimbabwe is raising concerns within the EU as it fears it might lose its level of influence over the country. China’s increase, not only in terms of aid but also trade, to Africa as a whole is increasing the competition for the EU and other Western powers, something they are neither use to nor especially happy about (Mutambara, 2013).

With that said, China and the EU might come to resemble one another even more in their roles as donors of foreign aid in the future. However, it is likely that certain differences will remain and this due to the foundation on which the friendship between respective donor and the recipient country is based. In light of this study it becomes clear that the common history that China and Zimbabwe share as developing countries definitely effect their relationship. Built on a sense of mutual understanding and trust this cooperative friendship embodies a sense of brotherhood which colours the aid initiatives taken by China in Zimbabwe. The EU on its end can never outrun its past as colonizers which inevitably influences its relationship with a country like Zimbabwe. This is further reaffirmed in the way the EU gives aid connected to conditions decided by themselves which does not always correspond with the wishes of the Zimbabwean government under the lead of Robert Mugabe.

Lastly, the ever changing situation within China demonstrate why it is important to continue to scrutinize its involvement on the African continent. The fact that China’s domestic industry sector is in a restructuring process, which is effecting China’s economic growth and thereby the global economy (Nylander, 2015), could arguably be considered to have an influence on its

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⁹ Sten Rylander, former Swedish Ambassador to Zimbabwe, interviewed the 10th of December 2015, Uppsala.
foreign aid initiatives in the long run. This in turn could have a large effects on the African continent as it has become increasingly dependent on foreign aid from China over the last couple of years. Moreover, the fact that Zimbabwe recently made the Chinese Yuan part of their legal currencies (The Guardian - II, 2015) can definitely be considered as a sign of how the relationship between the two countries is growing increasingly stronger. These two developments also demonstrate the importance of continuing to examine the EU’s role in Africa as the changing context inevitably influences its relationship, and thereby its aid opportunities, with African countries such as Zimbabwe.

6. CONCLUSION

This study set out with the aim of examine whether any similarities or differences could be identified when it comes to China and the EU as donors of foreign aid to Zimbabwe, and whether either donor seemed to comply with the principles of the Beijing or the Washington Consensus. What has become obvious is that the similarities outnumber the differences as projects often are implemented within the same sectors in rather similar manners, through similar channels and methods of cooperation. Signs point toward differences in the driving motives behind the actors’ engagement and in the outspoken goals of their foreign aid engagements. China advocate mutual benefits and ‘win-win’ cooperation while the main aspiration of the EU is to encourage democratic values, respect for human rights and good governance. Further research regarding the motives and the underlying causes that prompt the actors’ aid engagement in Zimbabwe is needed if we are to truly understand the impact of, and the reasons behind, their approach to foreign aid. Even though it is important to evaluate the different donors active within the aid sector the main concern for foreign aid should always be how it effects the recipient country, especially the poor people in a society who are most dependent on aid. Further studies on this subject would therefore benefit from focusing on how the different types of aid approaches of China and the EU effects the population in a given recipient country, to determine whether one of the approaches is more beneficial in reaching positive development outcomes.
7. REFERENCELIST


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